

*Grace Episcopal Church
Newington Connecticut
Parish Profile 2014*



“Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you for the glory of God”

WELCOME

We, the members of Grace Episcopal Church, are delighted that you are viewing our Parish profile. We have thoughtfully prepared this so that you may get to know us better. Our parish profile will outline where we came from, who we are today and who we aspire to be in the future.

We started as a small group of Episcopalians who had been meeting informally for ten years. This group decided to apply to become a parish. In 1872 Grace Church Parish formed with eleven families. See <http://www.gracechurchnew.org/history.html> for more information.

Who we are today is much the same as in 1872 but our world is so different in many ways. We still are hopeful, faithful, loving and a hardworking congregation. Our discernment team has worked on this Parish Profile after soliciting input from parish members through “Telling Our Story” and eight focus groups. Through much prayer and loving teamwork the Parish Profile reflects the thoughts, ideas and feelings of our parishioners. It will show our work through self-evaluation and reflection. Many pictures have been included to show the various ways we express our love for God in our community of worship and beyond.

What we aspire to be in the future, is different than where we are today. We are praying for a Rector who will respond to the “Call” with joy in the challenge of leading our parish. We would like our new Rector to stand with us as we move forward to an engaging future of exciting faith-led mission work; someone to lead us in our ministries and mission work throughout our wider community. We seek a Rector who gives a strong sermon that excites us spiritually and holds traditional values, but also reflects today’s world. We look for a Rector to lead us in the growth of our parish inclusive of all ages, races, gender and ethnicity. We know our call is a tall order. Through God all things are possible!

MISSION STATEMENT



“TO RENEW, TO SERVE AND TO ACCEPT ALL PEOPLE AS WE GROW TOGETHER IN CHRIST”

OUR PARISH GOALS

To renew and increase our individual and collective spiritual well-being, by offering a variety of programs, events and services throughout the program year

To increase service to the Newington community by assessing its current needs and matching those needs with the church's current outreach programs utilizing the parishioners' talents and the church's resources and facilities

To accept all who enter our doors through worship and activities as we increase the diversity of our parish

GOD'S MISSION AND EVANGELISM

Grace possesses a generous spirit and reaches out to those less fortunate, and in the best of times, outreach is a defining aspect of Grace Church. We have learned that mission and evangelism has been commanded of us by God through Jesus Christ. It is with this belief, and with God's loving presence in our lives, that we go out into the world sharing God's bounteous blessings and being the "Light of Christ" to all we come in contact.

In the Town of Newington, a member of Grace Church works at the Senior Center to coordinate state and federal programs for low income citizens. During one recent winter our church and rectory converted from oil to gas heat and there was a surplus of oil in our tanks. By God's Grace, our parishioner was able to arrange for the donated oil to be withdrawn and delivered to three town residents at no cost to them. When informed at our "One Minute Ministry" announcements a joyful and spontaneous applause came from the congregation. It was indeed God's blessing that three households were a little warmer that winter.

OUR PARISH LIFE

When you step through the doors of Grace Church on Sunday morning, you are warmly greeted and ushered into the sanctuary. A quick look around the Narthex shows an area busy with preparation for the service and coffee gathering. The Narthex is the hub of our parish life together. We are a small group, with deep roots and we are seeking God's guidance to grow through the power of the Holy Spirit as we live our mission to renew, serve and accept all people.



We currently share the downstairs of our building with another faith organization, St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church, in a traditional landlord/tenant role (www.stthomaschurchct.org). We are open to possibilities of expanding relationships including shared worship, education, fellowship and facilities partnership.

We are proud to be a church that opens our doors to all persons regardless of race, ethnicity, capabilities or gender orientation.

We are a Believe Out Loud Episcopal Congregation. Grace

Church is registered with Integrity USA (www.integrityusa.org), and listed on their website as a congregation where LGBT are affirmed.



In 2004 Grace Church received a [GreenCircle Award Program](#) for our fledgling efforts to become a green church. From that starting point, our parish has been proud to do its part over the years to be good stewards of the Earth. We have intentionally committed a million acts of green by asking our parishioners to pledge simple changes in their daily lives and we support global green initiatives locally, regionally and nationally.

OUR WORSHIP

Here at Grace we enjoy a rich history of worship with traditional liturgy and powerful sermons delivered by both ordained and lay persons. We value interpretation of the Lectionaries and how the messages relate to our daily lives.



The laity provides Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Visitors, morning and noonday prayer services in nursing homes on Sundays and a clergy educated and trained healing team ministry that is available in the rear section of the sanctuary, during communion time, for all who wish to request prayers.

Our pastoral care ministries team reaches out to parishioners who are unable to attend Sunday services. This is a loving ministry that is very heart-felt, thoughtful and meaningful by delivering flowers and sending hand crafted cards with messages of hope, love and encouragement.



Our music ministries enrich our worship with diverse offerings of gifts and talents from parishioners and visiting musicians. On Easter, we enjoyed music from our own "Ding-a-Ling" hand bell choir and we have been delighted with offerings from our young people.



OUR FAITH FORMATION



"Faith. . . It does not make things easy. It makes them possible."



We envision a renewed and vital multi-generational Faith Formation program as we move through transition (<http://www.gracechurchnew.org/about-us.html>) and grow as a parish.

Grace has a strong commitment to Christian Education in the Episcopal tradition by providing an inviting "Place of Grace" church school for our children. In the recent past, our children provided the Bible study as a sermon in the form of art work or felt board with characters to the parish. Our adult forums, bible and book studies offer innovative topics and are led by clergy and/or laity.

"I like Grace because we embrace tradition but encourage open thinking, diversity and discussion as a family."

"The dove at Easter is something spiritual for me. It brings a sense of peace."



OUR PROGRAMS



"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."



As a parish, we are committed to living the gospel through programs that enrich our church life and reach out to the community. We have a collection of activities, events and initiatives that are advocated passionately by their sponsors and supported generously by the congregation. That spirit is part of the fabric of who we are just like our bell tower or the stained glass windows.

Outreach

- Angel Tree to benefit Newington residents
- John Stage Food Bank
- New Britain Friendship Center
- Prudence Crandall Women's Center
- South Park Inn
- Welcome Table Breakfast

Church programs

- Bible Study
- Book Club
- Breakfasts, suppers and dinners
- Hi-Noon senior group
- Lenten programs

We open our doors to community organizations:

- AA (Alcoholic Anonymous) and other related groups
- Boy and Girl Scouts
- NA (Narcotics Anonymous)
- Red Cross blood drive, CPR and First Aid training

"I like the service at Grace and the fact that we open our doors willingly to the community."



OUR STEWARDSHIP

Our history of stewardship for worldwide and local mission supports Grace's commitment to the Diocese and tithing of all unrestricted gifts to Episcopal Relief and Development and the Newington Food Bank.



In 2014 we intentionally moved our stewardship program to the penitential season of Lent in an effort to delve deeper into our relationship with God and to focus on making stewardship a way of life by creating "seasons of stewardship" so it becomes a year around practice.

Since making that change earlier this year, we had a successful spring work day that was a fine testament to being good stewards of all that God has given us, including our beautiful church home. The comprehensive task list of chores and maintenance was about 50% completed and included a wide range of folks who normally don't sign up for these kind of events underscoring that stewardship is not just about turning in a pledge card.



Our stewardship committee has evolved from "pledging to the budget" to the philosophy of gratitude for all that God graciously and freely gives to us. We are continuing on our journey from the "place of scarcity to a place of abundance".

WHERE WE ARE GOING

Our hopes and desires for our life together with our new rector come from defining ourselves through focus group discussions and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

What our parish expects of our new rector:

- preach (with passion) sermons that are faithful to the Gospel but also carry a message relevant to everyday life
- inspire us by tapping into the parish's talents and gifts
- participate in the life and activities of the parish
- share a sense of humor and appreciation for the richness of life
- lead fearlessly with a bold and creative approach to try new things

From our parish, our new rector can expect:

- mindfulness of time constraints of a part-time position
- friendship, support and appreciation
- energy and commitment to work with you
- ability to be both understanding and patient

"The caring nature of Grace is a true asset."

OUR COMMUNITY - NEWINGTON

The town of Newington has two beginnings: the first springing from its agricultural roots and the second coming from the industrialization of Connecticut. Newington was founded in 1633 by members of a religious sect from a Massachusetts colony. It began as the West Farms section of Wethersfield.



With a population of approximately 30,500 Newington is a typical New England small town located five miles south west of the capital city of Hartford. Newington is home to the 60 acre Eddy Farm located right in the center of town with its bucolic pastures and cattle grazing. Another iconic landmark in Newington is the National Iwo Jima Memorial, built by survivors of the WW II Battle and located on the Newington/New Britain town line. (<http://www.sosiwojima.com/>)

Nestled below Cedar Mountain, past the town green on Main Street, the Town Hall, Mill Pond Park with its resident population of Canada geese and natural waterfall, there is an avenue shaded by maple trees. Set back from Maple Hill Avenue is the abundant physical campus of what we call our spiritual home, Grace Episcopal Church.

Additional information about Newington can be found on the following links:

www.npsct.org

www.newingtonchamber.com

OUR PARISH CAMPUS



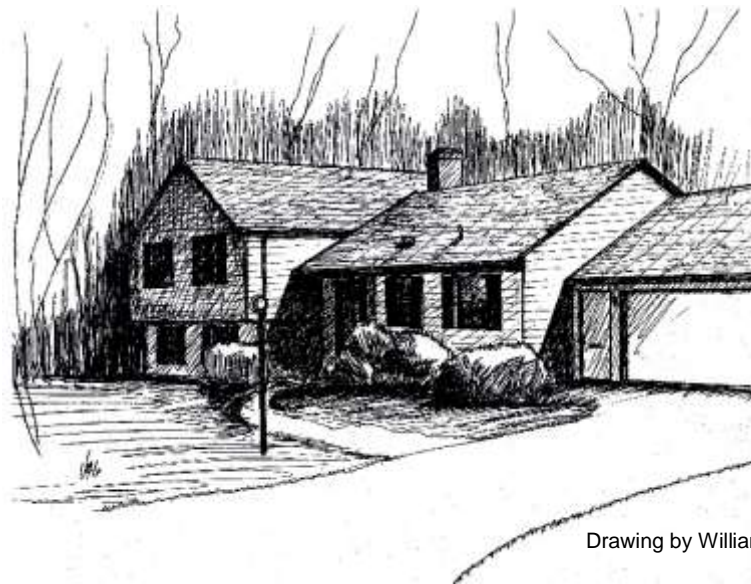
A memorial marker shaded by a large oak on a grassy area will draw your attention to our church building that is set back from a large parking lot. An "1874" cornerstone from the original church in Newington is located in the Bee and Butterfly Garden, accompanied by a wooden cross that stands at a height of 18 feet. At the building's entrance is our bell tower topped by a white cross which lights up at night.

Upon entering the sanctuary, which is colonial in design with bench pews, is the baptismal font (ca. 1881). The narthex leads to the rest of the church building's features: a chapel, a library, an office suite, and three rooms for classes or meetings and a stairwell that will take you to the lower level, the "community" area of the church.



The community room opens onto a transition patio leading to our memorial garden complete with a stone altar. The garden is the centerpiece of an expansive lawn area and separates the church from the rectory, which is a split level house featuring:

- eat in kitchen
- formal dining room
- 3 to 4 bedrooms
- 2 ½ baths
- family room with fireplace
- study/office
- full basement
- 1st floor laundry
- attached two car garage



Drawing by William VanCleave

OUR FINANCIALS

Grace Church is a self-funded parish. Our parishioners support the church through white envelope income. Our building is debt free and the vestry has voted to pass balanced budgets only. The use of building and rectory rent are initiatives of the vestry to offset the decline of pledge income rather than increasing the withdrawals from the reserve funds.

Expenses:	2013 Actuals	June 2014 YTD
Head Clergy Salary/Benefits	\$55,408	\$18,852
Staff Salaries	35,824	12,631
Property Maintenance/Supplies	22,629	7,337
Utilities	15,120	9,591
Office Expenses	8,500	1,858
Diocese Pledge	19,752	7,812
Church School	325	60
Music	1,450	1,540
Parish Life	1,864	4,125
Misc.	1,150	113
Outreach	1,600	2,257
Total:	\$163,457	\$74,242

Income:	2013 Actuals	June 2014 YTD
Pledge	\$113,686	\$ 53,447
Other Donations	3,331	1,341
Use of Building	9,200	6,240
B to B/Fundraisers	7,000	1,811
Reserve Withdrawal	9,000	
Rectory Rent	16,200	
Total:	\$162,292	
Money Market	\$63,498	
Investment Fund	26,161	
Checkbook Balance	3,898	
Total Grace Church Reserves	\$93,556	

Membership, Attendance and Service Numbers 2013 Actuals	
2012 members reported	227
Increases	6
Decreases	7
Average Sunday Attendance	100
Easter Sunday Attendance	110

Note: Our 2013 Annual Report and Parochial Report are available upon request for those interested candidates who wish to carefully review our numbers.

COME SPEAK WITH US; COME JOIN US

The parish and vestry of Grace Church believe that our call position can be a mutually rewarding opportunity. We know we are asking for a lot, but we also believe we are offering a lot as well. We pray for a faithful priest to join us in our journey and share the ministry to which God calls us together to do God's work in Newington and beyond. **If you have a passion for growing together with a small parish in their Mission to renew, serve and accept all people, come meet us and speak with us!**

Peace and blessings to you,

Melissa Hawley
Karen Hafert
Valerie J. Dumont
Laura Lynch
Jeanne Parker
Mabel Maynard
Jane Stewart
Paul Crosswhite
Daniel W. Corcoran

WE WANT TO TALK WITH YOU

Please email a copy of your OTM Profile, resume, and letter of interest to: thodapp@ctdiocese.org

The Rev. Canon Timothy Hodapp
Canon for Mission Leadership
The Episcopal Church in Connecticut
290 Pratt Street
Meriden, CT 06450

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH DISCERNMENT TEAM

Paul Crosswaith (Co-Chair)
Karen Halpert (Co-Chair)
Dan Carcaud (Chaplain)
Valerie Dumont
Melissa Haseley (Sr. Warden)
Laura Lynch
Mabel Maynard
Jeanne Parker
Jane Stewart (Recording Secretary)

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH VESTRY

Melissa Haseley (Sr. Warden)
Mitch Page (Jr. Warden)
Mark Shoemaker (Treasurer)
Shirley Adams (Clerk)
JoAnn Cromwell
Barbara Johnson (Alternate)
Kathy Johnson
Beverley Manning
Mabel Maynard
Marie Ritchie (Alternate)
Elizabeth Welk

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH RECRUITMENT TEAM

Paul Crosswaith (Co-Chair)
Karen Halpert (Co-Chair)
Valerie Dumont
Melissa Haseley (Sr. Warden)
Kathy Johnson
Mabel Maynard
Jeanne Parker
Kathy Shoemaker
Jane Stewart (Recording Secretary)

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CONNECTICUT

The Right Reverend Ian T. Douglas
The Right Reverend James E. Curry
The Right Reverend Laura J. Ahrens
Diocesan Consultant Melissa Jane Inrig

“Seek and you shall find”

The Discernment Team gratefully acknowledges James Dumont, Mark Shoemaker, John Whalen and Roy Zartarian and their generous photographic contributions to Grace Episcopal Church.

The Discernment Team also thanks our parishioners who shared their thoughts on worshipping at Grace.